

virtual file system ("VFS") for storing file system information for a single file system to manage a plurality files of said network storage system, wherein a client of said network storage system accesses said VFS to conduct file system operations over a first channel, said client for receiving a unique file identifier from said VFS; and

storage center comprising:

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a plurality of distributed object storage managers (DOSMs) for receiving requests, including said unique file identifier, to access said storage center; and

storage cluster, comprising a plurality of intelligent storage nodes, for storing files of a single file system across said intelligent storage nodes and for servicing access requests from said DOSMs;

wherein a client of said network storage system accesses said storage center and uses said file identifier to download files over a second channel, said second channel being different than said first channel.

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11. (Once Amended) A method for storing files in a network storage system, said method comprising the steps of:

storing file system information in a virtual file system "VFS" to manage a plurality of files of said network storage system;

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storing a plurality files in one or more storage centers;  
accessing said VFS to conduct file system operations over a first channel;  
receiving, for a file, a file identifier from said VFS;  
accessing said storage center using said file identifier to download said  
files of said network storage system over a second channel, said second channel  
being different than said first channel;  
selecting one of a plurality of distributed object storage managers  
(DOSMs) to service said request;  
storing files of a single file system across a plurality of intelligent storage  
nodes; and  
accessing one of said intelligent storage nodes from said DOSM selected  
to service said request.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

**Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

In the Office Action dated November 20, 2002, claims 1-4, 6, 10-15, 17 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,081,883,